

**Thomas Jefferson to Meriwether Lewis, May 16,  
1803, from Thomas Jefferson and Early Western  
Explorers, Transcribed and Edited by Gerard W. Gawalt,  
Manuscript Division, Library of Congress**

**Thomas Jefferson to Meriwether Lewis**

Washington May 16. 1803.

Dear Sir

Yours of the 14th is this moment received, & I hasten to answer it by return of post, that no time may be lost. The copy of instructions sent you are only a rough draught for consideration. They will not be signed or dated till your departure. Presuming you would procure all the necessary instruments at Philadelphia, which is a principal object of your journey there, the instructions say that the necessary instruments 'have been provided,' which will be true when they receive their ultimate form, date & signature, tho' nothing was provided at the time of writing the rough draught. This will serve to correct the impression which has been misunderstood, and to let you know you are relied on to provide every thing for yourself. With respect to the Theodolite, I wish you to be governed entirely by the advice of Mr. Patterson & Mr. Ellicott: as also as to the time piece & whatever else they think best. Mr. Garnett told us he had some good ones still on hand; which I remind you of, lest you should not be able to get one in Philadelphia. Accept my affectionate salutations.  
Th: Jefferson

FC in the hand of Thomas Jefferson. Thomas Jefferson Papers, Library of Congress.